

From ONLINE LEARNING E-NEWS

SEPT 3, 2002

PRINTING OUT PRESENTATIONS

Your trainers have always provided hard copy of procedures during training sessions.

Now you're putting all your procedures online.

Trainers still hand out hard copy even though the material is on a projection screen behind them.

Should trainers train from the screen or the paper -- or both?

One of these two approaches might help, says Cris Ballinger (BallingerC@pamf.org) in response to that reader query:

- o Create a "cheat sheet" of the most important points in the procedures and hand it out with the instructions of how to find the documents online.

- o Create a PowerPoint presentation of major topics trainers will review in a classroom. "Print them out three to a page," says Ballinger. "This gives an area on the right for students to take notes" -- and lets students follow along and "see where you are going."

<http://www.bluesquirrel.com/clickbook/>

Ballinger prints using ClickBook (\$50) print-format software from a firm called Blue Squirrel of Sandy, Utah.

She is a computer-training systems analyst for Palo Alto (Calif.) Medical Foundation, a clinic and research facility.

"Get really fancy using preprinted color paper or card stock for the covers," says Ballinger. "This way it can be used for reference and notes."

TEACH THEM HOW

Laura Culver (virt_girt@yahoo.com) suggests teaching learners how to access online information during training sessions.

Moreover, teach them to "transfer what they know about using paper-based products as reference materials to the world of online reference materials," says Culver.

For example, show trainees how to take notes online -- copy a page of online information, paste it into a word-processing program and mark it up.

That provides a customized reference that is "more valuable to them once they return to their desk," says Culver, a Highlands Ranch, Colo., e-learning consultant. "Just projecting this information to learners doesn't give them the hands-on 'try it,' " says Culver.

"Remember, learners need to use what you're presenting in training sessions."

GIVE 'EM HARD COPY

Joe Leben (joe@lebeninc.com) thinks e-learners should be able to carry off hard copy.

Learners experience a "lack of closure" if they "walk away with nothing they can hold in their hands," he contends.

The Minocqua, Wis., e-learning consultant suggests these possibilities:

- o Print and send out procedures you'll discuss in the course.
- o Provide a hard-copy summary document with key content from the course. Suggest the learner use it as a job aid or as a reference document.
- o Provide job aids with content not presented in the course.
- o Print detailed reference documents that supplement the content from the course. "In many cases, these reference documents already exist and may have been used as source material to help create the course in the first place," says Leben.
- o Give learners a hard copy with ALL the content from the e-course. Convert media to graphics "that make the main point" of media.

This last approach accommodates learners who won't take an e-course at all, or who learn best by reading, says Leben.

Engineers and programmers tend to learn best by reading, Leben adds.

Printing it all out especially helps learners in "highly technical courses," says Leben. His firm prints out everything for most of its self-study e-courses.

Provide hard copy or put documents online in Microsoft Word, Adobe Acrobat or another format for learners to download and print.

What about the reader's question regarding on-screen vs. hardcopy presentation?

"It's almost always best to do both," says Leben.

In a traditional classroom or an e-classroom, provide printouts of what learners see on the projection screen so learners can take notes on the hard copy.

THE WAY THEY WANT IT

Finally, "when people want information, they want it in the most convenient format," says Peter Rizza (prizza@princetoncenter.com).

Sometimes core content should be online, sometimes printed, says Rizza, president of Princeton Center for Education Services Inc. in Princeton, N.J.

Sometimes it should be online and easy to download and print in the case of job aids, checklists and troubleshooting tables.

Offer key information in more than one format and let learners decide "how they would like to see it," says Rizza.

His firm provides knowledge-capture templates that let you create a document once and make it available in several formats for workers. Templates cost \$1,950.

Copyright 2002
VNU Business Media
0120903

IT'S WEEKLY. IT'S FREE!
To receive Online Learning e-News,
go to <http://www.vnulearning.com>
and click FREE E-newsletters.